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THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH:

A

SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE

FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF
SALEM AND THE VICINITY,

ON THE

FIRST ANNIVERSARY,

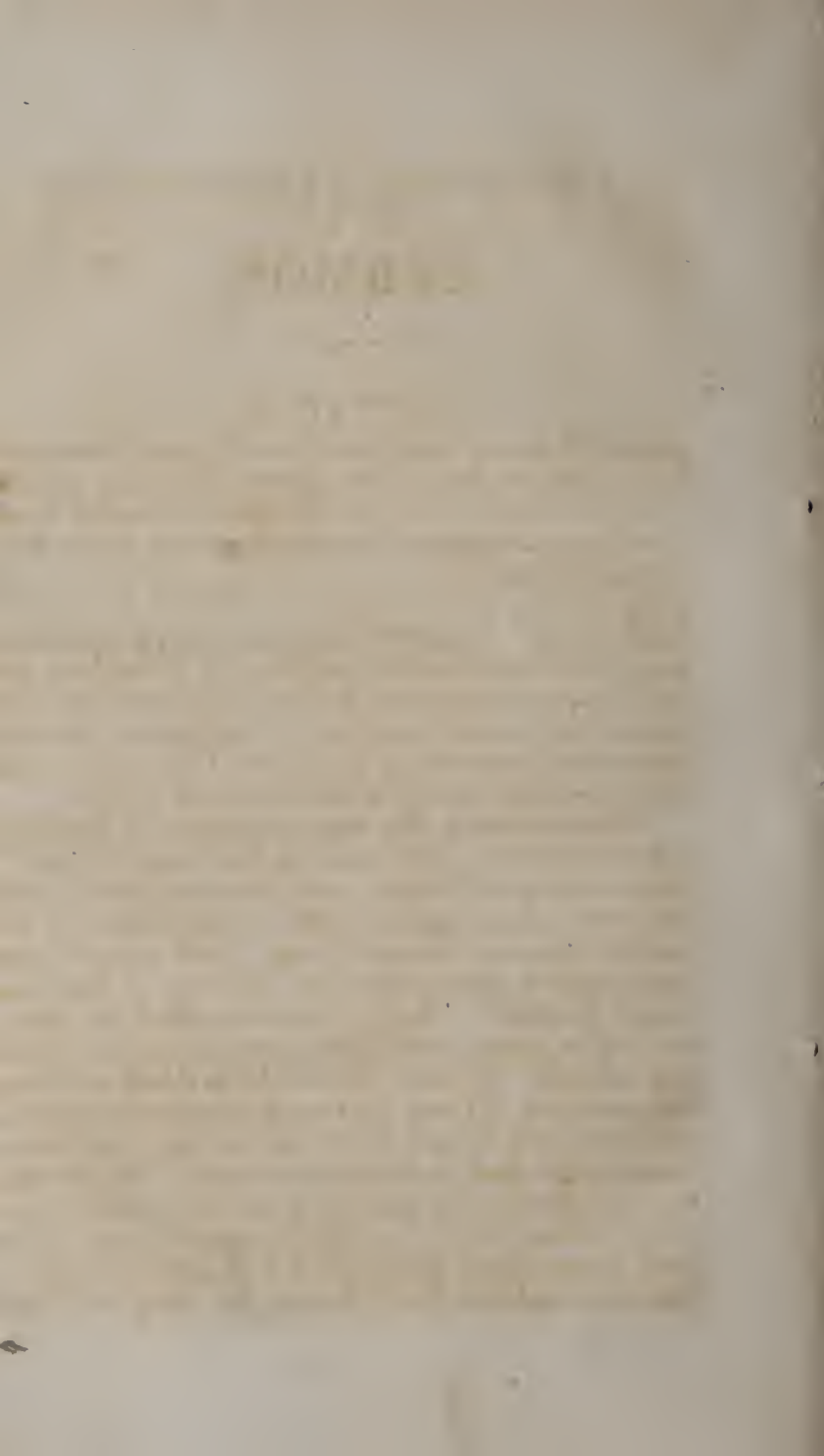
JAN. 6, 1813.

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BY SAMUEL WORCESTER, D.D.
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SALEM:

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1813.



A

SERMON.

DANIEL ii. 44.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed : and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

JEHOVAH, in prophetic scripture, presents himself to men, with most impressive majesty. "He declares the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." He has all futurity open to his view—all the kingdoms of the world at his disposal—all the events of ages under his control.

Nebuchadnezzar, the renowned king of Babylon, "dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled." The wise men of Babylon were required both to tell him what his dream was, and to shew him the interpretation; and because they could not, "there went forth a decree that the wise men of Babylon should be slain." Daniel, however, asked for time; and to him, after earnest supplication to God, the secret was revealed. He then obtained an audience with the king, and said, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these:—Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This

image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

This image, according to the interpretation of Daniel, represented four successive empires. The head of gold denoted the Babylonian empire, then existing in its glory. The breast and arms of silver denoted the empire of the Medes and Persians; the belly and thighs of brass, the empire of the Macedonians and Grecians; the legs of iron, the empire of the Romans; and the feet and toes, part of iron and part of clay, the same Roman empire, divided into several kingdoms. Thus far the interpretation is plain and incontrovertible.

Nor is there, indeed, any controversy, as to what was denoted by the "stone, which was cut out without hands, and which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." The interpretation of this part of the dream is given by the prophet in the words of our text. *In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* This, unquestionably, is THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH; called in the New Testament, with particular reference to this very prophecy, *The kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of God.*

The four successive temporal empires, here symbolized by the several parts of the great image, were af-

terwards shewn to Daniel, in a vision recorded in the seventh chapter, under the symbols of *four great beasts*. The first, or Babylonian empire, was represented by a beast like *a lion, with eagles' wings*; the second, or Medo-Persian empire, by a beast like *a bear, with three ribs in his mouth*; the third, or Macedonio-Grecian empire, by *a leopard with four wings of a fowl*; and the fourth, or Roman empire, by *a beast, dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly, which had great iron teeth, and which devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet*. This last beast had also ten horns, denoting the same division of the empire into several kingdoms, which before was symbolized by the ten toes of the great image. Daniel "beheld until this terrible beast was slain, and his body was given to the burning flame;" and in this connexion he says, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." This again is THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH; and the terms of the description are exactly coincident with those of our text.

This kingdom is to be the subject of our present contemplation; and only in reference to this will the temporal empires be noticed. It was, indeed, for the sake of opening a prospective view of this kingdom, and marking its rise and establishment in the world, that the temporal empires were introduced into these prophetic visions. For with the Spirit of prophecy, the rise and fall of earthly kingdoms, and the various changes and revolutions of the world, are of no account, excepting as they relate to that great work of God, which by means of them he is carrying forward,

for the glory of his Majesty, and the salvation of his redeemed.—In contemplating THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH, it may be useful to consider *the time of its rise*;—*its destined extent*;—*the means of its advancement*;—*its duration*;—and *its glory*.

1. *The time of its rise*.—In some sense, the Messiah had a kingdom from the beginning of time: for he “was set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was;—and all things were made by him and for him.” The church of his redeemed also commenced immediately after the fall; and in all the generations of old he had a people to serve him—a people acknowledged as *his*, and subject to his special administration. He was the “Hope,” and the “Shield,” of the patriarchs of the first ages; and the “Leader and Commander” of the ancient Israel of God. But the prophets looked forward to a time when he should be inaugurated in form; and, *as King upon the holy hill of Zion*, commence a new administration. This was to follow his incarnation. Accordingly Isaiah prophetically sung, “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever.” It is with this reign of the MESSIAH, *as the Son of David*, that we are at present particularly concerned.

The commencement of this is marked by these words of our text: IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom*. The three preceding empires, the Babylonian, the Persian, and the Grecian, having successively passed away, the prophet now contemplates the Roman empire in its whole duration, as denoted by the legs of iron, and the feet and toes, part of iron and

part of clay. *And in the days of these kings*, he says, i. e. of the kings belonging to this last empire, *shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom*. Accordingly, after the Roman empire was established on the ruins of the Grecian, Jesus Christ was born, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar. In the reign of Tiberius, having been "taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain," he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and *was seated at the right hand of power*. It was *then*, that "one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him, and there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him." It was *then*, that the reign of the Messiah, as the son of David, commenced, and what is properly called the kingdom of heaven began to be set up.

I say, *began to be set up* : for it deserves to be particularly noted, that the setting up of this kingdom is represented as a progressive work, a work of time. The kingdom is first symbolized by a stone cut out without hands ; afterwards the stone becomes a mountain, and fills the whole earth : but this is not until the great image is so completely demolished as to be made "like the chaff of the summer threshing floors."

The great image remains, after the stone appears. Accordingly it is a remarkable fact, that the Roman empire, which was symbolized by the legs and the feet and toes of the image, and was in being when the Messiah ascended to his throne, has continued in being down to the present time. It has indeed undergone many changes ; has passed from hand to hand ; has been removed as to the seat of its power, from place to place ; and, agreeably to the prophecy, has, at different times, been divided into several kingdoms. Yet it has been the same empire still ; and, as if by a special providence, and for the express purpose of shewing the fulfilment

of the prophecy, its *name* has been continued.—Though its seat was removed from Rome to Constantinople, it was nevertheless called the *Roman Empire*. When, after various revolutions, its seat was fixed in Germany, and its body was divided into several kingdoms, it was still, and with a sort of venerable superstition, recognized by the name of the “Holy Roman Empire.” And at this very day, not only is the name preserved, but the iron crown and far famed *insignia* of the ancient Roman power, are the pride and the boast of that formidable empire which holds the world in terror.

In this regard, the fulfilment hitherto of the coincident prediction, in the seventh chapter, is not less remarkable. The last of the four great beasts, “dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly,” was to continue, until the “Ancient of days” should appear with awful judgment, “the thrones be cast down,” and “the saints possess the kingdom.” Accordingly that beast has continued. Though, as predicted by John in the Revelation, it was at one period *wounded to death, its deadly wound has been healed*; its “little horn” also, the symbol of the papal power, has appeared, with all its formidable characteristics: and, in our own age, it still appears the same beast, *with his great iron teeth and his ten horns, dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly, devouring, breaking in pieces, and stamping the residue with his feet*.

During the continuance of the image, “the stone cut out without hands” appears, in the prophetic vision, comparatively small. The last great beast also, during his whole existence, and under his various forms, is represented “as speaking great words against the Most High, wearing out the saints of the Most High, and thinking to change times and laws.” Accordingly the kingdom of Christ on earth has always hitherto been of very limited extent; and, from age to age, it

has been opposed, counteracted, and violently assailed, by the Roman power in its successive forms, pagan, papal, and infidel. It is now eighteen hundred years, since the God of heaven began to set up this kingdom; and though, from time to time, its limits have been extended, and its numbers increased; yet even now it comprises but a small part of mankind, and is in a state of depression and struggle.—But we are,

2. To consider *the destined extent of this kingdom.*

Thou sawest, says Daniel, until a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces; then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; AND THE STONE THAT SMOTE THE IMAGE BECAME A GREAT MOUNTAIN, AND FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH.

The materials of the whole image are represented as remaining, till the last period even of the feet and toes.

So in the seventh chapter, though the three first beasts had “their dominion taken away; yet their lives (it is said) were prolonged for a season and a time.” The Roman empire has, at some periods, comprised within its limits all, or nearly all, the countries, which had been comprehended in either of the three preceding empires; and so, under the reign of the legs and feet, the brass, the silver and the gold, the materials of the other parts of the image, have remained.—But the whole image is to be demolished. *The stone cut out without hands is to fall upon it and grind it to powder.*

The order marked in the prophecy deserves to be distinctly noted. The stone smites the image upon the feet of iron and clay, and breaks them in pieces; then are “the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold,” all the materials of the image, “broken to pieces together,” “made as the chaff,” and “carried away

by the wind :” *then* “the stone becomes a mountain, and fills the whole earth.” When the time shall come for the utter demolition of the image, the stone will first smite its feet, where its power now, and lastly, resides ; and the iron and clay being broken in pieces, the other materials will quickly be demolished. And this demolition of the Roman empire is to make way for the establishment of the Messiah’s kingdom in all the world.

“I beheld,” says Daniel in the seventh chapter, “I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” And, says the interpreting angel, “the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” “And” then “*the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.*”

Of this destined extent of the Messiah’s kingdom, the scriptures abound with predictions. “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord ; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.”—“All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.”—“The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”—“From the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles ; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering : for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.”* Let us then,

3. Contemplate the *means of extending this kingdom.*

“My kingdom,” says Christ, “is not of this world.” It is a kingdom neither established upon worldly principles ; nor designed for the attainment of worldly ob-

* Ps. xxii. 27.—lxxxvi. 9. Isa. xi. 9. Mal. i. 11.

jects ; nor to be promoted by worldly policy or power. It is a kingdom erected in the hearts, and over the consciences of men ; composed only of voluntary, willing subjects ; and to be advanced and extended, only by means of the truth, accompanied by the spirit of God. *The stone was cut out without hands.*

It appears indeed, from what has before been considered, that, for the purpose of giving to this kingdom its destined extent, earthly powers are to be overthrown, and the great and terrible empire in particular is to be broken to pieces. Christ is often represented as a mighty conqueror ; and the powers of the world, hostile to his reign, are warned that he “ will speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure ;” that he “ will rule them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” This work of vengeance he will accomplish, and for the accomplishment of it he will use such instruments and means, as are suited to the purpose. But this work will not *extend* his kingdom ; it will only *prepare the way* for extending it : it will remove obstructions ; it will demonstrate the truth of the divine word ; it will shew the exalted Messiah’s power ; it will impress the world with awe. But for the actual advancement of his kingdom, other, and very different means must be employed.

For the setting up of this kingdom, this commission was given : “ GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE.” The ministers of the Messiah accordingly went forth : and “ the weapons of their warfare, though not carnal, were mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.” In spite of the inveterate prejudices of the Jews, the proud philosophy of the Greeks, the violent opposition of the ruling powers, and the sottish superstition or profligate wickedness, every where, of the people ; the power of the gospel prevailed, “ casting down imaginations, and every high thing, which

exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Thousands and millions, in different lands, were "turned from Satan unto God;" and "translated from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of his dear Son."

Whenever, since, or wherever this kingdom has been extended, or advanced, it has been by the same means. Miracles indeed ceased, after sufficient attestations of this kind had been given: but the influences of the divine Spirit have continued to accompany the divine word; and the kingdom of Christ has been maintained from age to age, and occasionally enlarged, only by the means comprised in the dispensation of the gospel. And it is by the same means that it is to be maintained, and enlarged, until it be established in all the earth.—It is still "the commandment of the everlasting God, that the gospel should be made known unto all nations, for the obedience of faith." "For how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" According to the predictions, therefore, of the latter day glory, "the Lord will give the word, and great will be the company of them that publish it;" "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;"—"the gospel shall be preached unto all that dwell on the earth; and, "from the least of them unto the greatest of them, all shall know the Lord."

4. The duration of this kingdom is to be considered.—It is a kingdom *which shall never be destroyed; it shall not be left to other people; it shall stand forever.* Such is the sure word of prophecy in our text.

John, in the sixth of the Revelation, says, "I saw heaven opened, and, behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes

were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns.—And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the wine press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun ; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God ; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together, to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse :—and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” The beast thus taken, and cast into the lake, is the same with the fourth beast of Daniel, “great and terrible, *whose body was seen to be destroyed and given to the burning flame.*” It is the same great power which is symbolized, in our context, by the legs and feet of the image. And this whole stupendous vision of John is a view of that “battle of the great day of God Almighty,” in which the exalted Messiah goes forth, in terrible majesty, to execute judgment, and which is to terminate in the utter subversion and ruin of the powers combined against his kingdom.

After this, according to another vision of the same awful scene, proclamation is made from heaven, *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*; AND HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER. In connexion with these predictions, indeed, mention is made of a thousand years, during which Satan is to be bound, that he may not deceive the nations. And it appears, that, during a thousand years, after the final overthrow of the hostile powers, the dominion of Christ on earth is to be so complete, that, as Daniel expresses it, "all people, nations and languages shall serve him."—But his reign is not limited to this period; it is not limited to the duration of this earth. After the visions, already cited, and another of the general and final judgment, John had a vision of "a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." This was a vision of the kingdom of Christ in its consummated state; and in this state, its duration is to be endless. "Of his kingdom," said Gabriel to Mary, "Of his kingdom there shall be no end."

5. The *glory* of this kingdom is a subject for most delightful contemplation.—It is a kingdom of light—of holiness—of peace—and of joy.

It is a kingdom of light. In consequence of the fall, "darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people." Of God—of the things of their highest concernment as accountable and immortal beings, mankind are in deplorable ignorance. Christ is THE LIGHT. He is the "SUN of Righteousness, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace." In those parts of the world, upon which he has arisen, his illuminating power has been manifest, and all who rightly receive the knowledge of him, are "children of the day," and "walk in the light of life." Wherever his name is made known, darkness is dissipated; as his

kingdom advances, light will spread and increase ; and when it shall be universally established, “ the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

It is a kingdom of holiness. As the *Sun of RIGHTEOUSNESS*, Christ not only enlightens the minds, but purifies the hearts of men ;—not only shews them the way of truth and peace, but makes them alive to virtue and to glory. As his light prevails, error, infidelity, and ungodliness, will yield to its influence ; popery, mahometanism, paganism, with their hideous superstitions and corruptions, will vanish away ; and the earth will be purged from the mingled and pestilent pollutions with which, for ages after ages, it has been imbued and covered. Among all nations, “ God, who is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness ; in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a *pure* offering ;—the people shall be all righteous, and the very bells of the horses shall be HOLINESS TO THE LORD.”

It is a kingdom of peace. PRINCE OF PEACE is a name of the Messiah ; and under his reign, “ the mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness.” “ He will make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth ; nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ;—and they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.”—“ The wolf also shall take up his abode with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling shall come together ; and a little child shall lead them.—And the suckling shall play upon the hole of the aspic, and upon the den of the basilisk shall the newly weaned child lay his hand.—They shall not hurt, nor destroy.”* The selfish and ferocious passions, which for

* Isa. xi. Lowth's Version.

so many ages have filled the earth with violence and blood, shall give place to universal good will, kindness, and love; and "the righteous shall flourish and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth."

IT IS A KINGDOM OF JOY. Under the universal influence of the Sun of Righteousness and Prince of Peace, what can there be but universal happiness! "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth; all nations shall call him blessed; all people shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away."

"Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true!
 "Scenes of accomplished bliss! which who can see,
 "Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
 "His soul refreshed with foretaste of the joy?
 "Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
 "And clothe all climes with beauty."*—

This is but a faint view of the glory of the Messiah's kingdom, as it shall ere long appear even on this earth. Who then can describe the glory with which it shall appear, in the new earth, and the new heaven? There its light, its holiness, its happiness, will immeasurably transcend the highest conception, which man or angel can now form, and will be perpetually increasing to all eternity. "Of the *increase* of his government and peace, there shall be no end."

My brethren, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The predictions which open to us these views of his kingdom, are among the plainest of the prophetic oracles. We have gone into no doubtful particulars; and in regard to the general outline, there can be no reasonable disagreement among the serious believers in revelation. "These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel, to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. And he that testifieth these

things, faith, Surely I come quickly :” and let every heart respond, “ Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

THE FIRST REFLECTION, which offers itself from our subject, is that this world belongs to Christ.—He is the Creator of it, and he made it for himself :—He has redeemed it with his own blood, and for his own purposes. As he became the Son of man for the propitiation of the sins of the world ; so, *as* the Son of man, he is exalted at the right hand of Majesty in the heavens, Lord of lords, and King of kings. From the Eternal Father, the proclamation has gone forth, “ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ?—I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.—He shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. He shall break them with a rod of iron ; he shall dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel. Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.”*

Jesus Christ, then, is the RIGHTFUL SOVEREIGN. The earth with its fulness is his ; the silver and the gold are his ; kingdoms and empires, with their treasures, their people, and their rulers, are his. The nations indeed have been in rebellion against him, and are still in rebellion ; but he will assert his right, and make them know that “ he is Lord of all.”

2. By the signs of the times, we are warned, that Christ is now advancing in glorious majesty, to take the full possession of his kingdom. It is a time, by universal acknowledgment, such as never was known before, “ since man was upon the earth.”—“ Distress of nations

with perplexity!—the sea and the waves roaring!—men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth!"—A battle raging, of tremendous extent, and of portentous aspect!—thrones and kingdoms passing away!—"the foundations of the world out of course!"—the earth and the heavens shaking!—All people are struck with astonishment; but how few, alas! rightly consider and understand!

This amazing scene of things, my brethren, is in perfect agreement with the sure word of prophecy. The mystic period of "a thousand two hundred and sixty days" is hastening to its close. The power of empire is now in the feet and toes of the great image. As yet indeed the power is terrible; and is employed by the advancing King of kings, as the rod of his anger, for the punishment of the nations which have slain his servants, and cast off their allegiance to Him. But the battle will continue; "to the end of the war desolations are determined;" and ere long, the decisive blow will fall *on the feet of the image, and the iron and clay, the brass, the silver and the gold, will be broken to pieces together, and made as the chaff of the summer threshing floors.*

Nor are these the only indications of the glorious Sovereign's advance. His "angel is now flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people; and proclaiming with a loud voice, "*Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come;*" turn from your vanities, "and worship him who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." His servants are roused to unexampled exertion. His ensign is lifted up; his word is passing into all languages; his heralds are going forth into all lands; preparations are in forwardness for his name to be published to all people as their Saviour and their God.

These signs, my brethren, are not to be disregarded. Though, according to the prophetic word, “the wicked do wickedly, and none of the wicked understand”—yet the wise shall understand.”—It is now too late in the day for the scoffer’s taunting question, *Where is the promise of his coming! for all things do NOT continue as they were from the beginning.* At this very time, his predictions are far advanced in fulfilment; his tokens glitter in the view of all nations, and all men are warned, that “he will make a short work in the earth.”

3. Wherever the gospel is known, all people are now specially called on to acknowledge Christ, as their Saviour and King, and to assist in extending his kingdom.

To you, my hearers, the glad tidings of this kingdom are published. To you the proclamation is made, that “He who was crucified without the gate of Jerusalem, is exalted at the right hand of power, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins; and that unto him every knee should bow, and every tongue confess.” To you his overtures of amnesty are tendered; to you the call is addressed to accept his grace, to bow to his sceptre, to acknowledge your persons with all that you have to be his, and to shew yourselves the willing, the happy subjects of his advancing and everlasting kingdom. This call no one of you can disregard, or disobey, without incurring the guilt of obstinate rebellion, and the peril of perishing from the way under his kindled wrath.—The same is the case with all people, wherever his gospel is published. “And blessed are they who hear, obediently, the joyful sound.” “They shall see the good of his chosen”—they shall “rejoice in the gladness of his nation”—they shall “glory with his inheritance” forever.—With those who refuse, it will be far otherwise. To them the mighty Saviour, and Sovereign, says, “Behold, my people shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed;

behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit; and ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen."

But, my brethren, it is not enough that you submit as the willing subjects of our glorious King; you must assist in extending his kingdom. For what purpose, indeed, do you give yourselves and all that you have to him; but to be employed in his service, that you may share in the glory of his triumphs, and sit down with him on his throne?—Do you ask how you shall assist?—The answer is ready.—The great work is before you—*that of giving his word to all people in their own languages, and sending faithful men according to his appointment, to preach it to every creature under heaven.* And every one in this house, every person in the christian world, has an opportunity by shewing a friendly countenance to the work, by praying for its success, and by contributing as ability is given for its support and furtherance, to do something for the honour of Christ and for his possession of his kingdom.

'*But some do not approve of this design:*'—And were there not some, and of those too who "made their boast in God," who did not approve of the first publication of the gospel? In what age indeed, in what part of the world, have the friends of Christ ever engaged in a design for the advancement of his kingdom, which was not regarded with coldness by some, with jealousy by others—which was not discountenanced with derision by some, with frowns by others—which was not opposed with insidious artifice by some, with open violence by others?—'*But it is not necessary to propagate the gospel among the heathen; they will do very well without it!*'—For what purpose then, did Christ give his blood—and command that his gospel should be preached to all people?—'*It is a vain attempt—the heathen will not change their religion!*'—It is the word, however, of eternal truth, that all the ends of the world shall turn

unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations *shall* worship before him. Whom shall we believe? Is the arm of the Lord shortened?—is his Spirit straitened?—*‘But the Missionaries will be sent back.’*—That is yet to be known. But what if they are? What if some men in another part of the world, of a similar spirit with those here who hope it will be so, should undertake to obstruct the mission? Is a large and populous part of the world, for such a reason, to be blotted from the map of Christ’s dominions? Or, if he permit one attempt for evangelizing a nation to fail; are his people, whose faith and perseverance he would thus try, pusillanimously to relinquish the design? Is it so, my brethren, that we have learned Christ? Then let us never more mention his name!

‘But, if permitted to stay, they must encounter great hardships and perils.’—And pray how was it with the Apostles themselves, the first Missionaries of the Cross? Were they not treated as the “filth of the world—the offscouring of all things?” Did not bonds and imprisonments await them in every place? Were they not in perils continually, and in deaths oft? And did not their gracious Lord know it would be so, when he sent them forth?—*‘But they are changing their sentiments.’*—Men, we know are liable to change—are liable to defection. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure;” nor will the grace of God fail of furnishing stable and faithful men for the missionary service.—*‘The expense must be great—it will impoverish the country.’*—My brethren, how many thousands of dollars have been sent from this country to India in one year? More than enough to support, for the same time, a thousand missionaries!—And for what? For articles more valuable than the souls of men?—for interests more important than those of Christ’s kingdom?—Then indeed the souls of men are not worth the cost of their salvation!—The kingdom of Christ is not worth the expense of extending it!—*‘But the present is an unfavourable time;*

* It is estimated upon sure data, that the expense of the ardent

for people are losing, rather than gaining property.—Well, then, let them secure at least a small portion of what they yet have, by investing it in that kingdom which shall endure forever—by committing it to HIM who will repay them with imperishable treasures.

My brethren, these objections, when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, will be found lighter than air. Men may say what they please; the profane may taunt, the pharisaical may decry, the *wise* may demur: but it is all in vain. Christ will advance, and take possession of his kingdom. “Every valley shall be filled before him, and every mountain and hill shall be made low.” The faces of those who “make a wide mouth” shall be covered with confusion; the wisdom of the wise shall be turned into foolishness; and every opposing power shall be broken in pieces. If *you* decline the pleasure, the honour, the everlasting reward, of aiding this work; others will be found who will not: and the work will proceed, till the shouts of salvation are heard in every clime.—But you will not decline. You will account it your highest joy, that you may assist in bringing your Saviour and Lord into the possession of his kingdom; and you will hail his advance with the grateful welcome:

“Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,

“Receive yet one—the crown of all the earth,

“Thou who alone art worthy.”

AMEN.

Spirits, *annually* consumed in the United States, is more than THIRTY MILLIONS of dollars!—But if the people of these States can afford thirty millions every year for an article, in main part, not only absolutely unnecessary, but incalculably injurious; can they not afford a few thousands for the purpose of imparting the present consolations and the everlasting blessings of the gospel to their perishing fellow men? Or might they not spare a few thousands of the thirty millions for this important object? Or will any zealously cry out, “*Why was this waste?—Why was not this given to the poor?*” (Mark xiv. 4, 5. and John xii. 5, 6.) and yet shew no concern respecting the other most enormous and ruinous expense?